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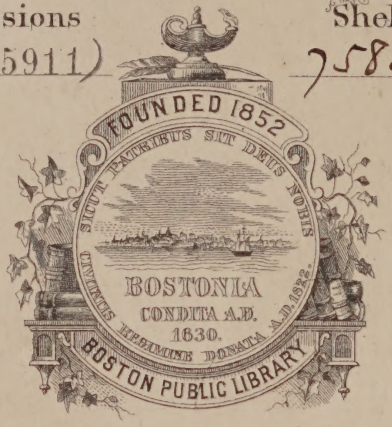

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AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

MALDEN TEMPERANCE SOCIETY,

January 21, 1838,

BY JAMES D. GREEN.

Published by the Executive Committee of the Society.

BOSTON:

PRESS OF J. HOWE, No. 39, MERCHANTS ROW.

1838.

LICENSES GRANTED FOR THE "PUBLIC GOOD" THE SOURCE OF UNMINGLED EVIL.

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AN ADDRESS, &c.

Gentlemen of the Malden Temperance Society;

It affords me pleasure, in compliance with the invitation given me by your Committee, to appear before you this evening as an advocate of the Temperance Reformation. Particularly does it give me pleasure to appear as an advocate of this cause in the town which gave me birth, in which I passed the period of my early boyhood, and to which, notwithstanding the changes that have since come over us, and though I am able to recognize in this assembly so few of those, who were my early companions and school-fellows, I still feel connected by many strong and many pleasing associations.

The Temperance Reformation, I believe, is to constitute an era in the history of man. It is a cause which commends itself to the wise and good of every name. Forgetting their diversities of opinion, both in politics and religion, all here unite, as on common ground, to aid each other in urging onward this great moral reform. For it is not one party, nor one portion of mankind, that is alone concerned, but it is the whole human family, of which we ourselves are but individual members. It is emphatically the cause of humanity. And, while there is not a little, in the condition and prospects of our government and country, that is calculated to fill the breast of the patriot and the Christian with concern, there is much, in the prospects of the Temperance Reformation, that may reasonably inspire us with confidence and joy. We behold in it strong indications, of which there are many in our day too unequivocal to be mistaken, that the wisest and best minds among us are waking up to recognize the claims of humanity. It is the glorious distinction of our times to witness the development of that principle, which leads

the individual to interest himself for the welfare of his race; to make personal effort and personal sacrifice for the public good. This principle has manifested itself upon occasion, heretofore, in the efforts of one and another of the world's reformers; but never, till the present age, has it united with one consent the hearts and the hands of so many of the wise and good.

This principle is the infallible criterion of every one's philanthropy. Do you claim to be regarded as a lover of your country? Do you pretend to be a friend to mankind? You will not shrink then from the application of the test. Show to the world what is the effort, and what the sacrifice, that you will make, for the promotion of the public good. It is this principle, which has commenced and is carrying onward the great Temperance Reformation; a work, which is indissolubly connected with the highest interests of universal man. It is doing more than every thing else to improve man's physical and intellectual, his moral and social condition, by removing the cause of the largest part of all the evils, the poverty, the wretchedness, the crimes, of the world.

To the onward movement of such a cause, who is there that will stand forth as the avowed opponent? Other reforms, at their commencement, reforms of government, and reforms of religion, have struggled against a host of opposers on principle. But, to the Temperance Cause, is there any one who has the hardihood to pretend to be opposed on principle? Where is the individual, having any claim to respectability, or any decent regard to his own reputation, who will avow himself openly an opponent on principle of the Temperance Reformation? I ask, is there any? No; not one. The cause commends itself irresistibly to the good wishes of all the respectable and decent portion of the community. But there is much that opposes the progress of the cause in secret. There are many imagined interests; there are the lower propensities; the animal appetites of human nature; against which the contest is still longer to be waged.

A great work has already been accomplished. A progress has been made in this reform, without a parallel in the history of the world. How recent is the commencement of the work! There are but few, of those to whom I speak, so young, that their mem-

ories do not go back to the beginning of these associated efforts. And now, if you go over the whole length and breadth of our land, you can hardly find the village, so obscure, in which the friends of Temperance have not joined their hands in the cause. Even now has our example exerted a salutary influence in other quarters of the world. England has not disdained to learn the lesson from these United States. Our principles in this work she has adopted and applied to practice, with results far beyond the most sanguine calculation. Nor has the influence of our example here stopped; it is producing its effects on human welfare in other countries; in the remotest Indies; and in the islands of the sea. The ball, which here a few years ago began to move, has been rolling on,—sometimes at an accelerated, and sometimes at a partially retarded, rate,—but still its progress has been onward, till it has accumulated a momentum, which no obstacle can withstand, and which will carry it completely and triumphantly round the globe.

"It would be an act of ingratitude towards our American friends," says an European writer, "were we, in any degree, to throw into the shade the obligations under which we lie to them, for having originated this noble cause. If the names of WASHINGTON and others are deservedly dear to them for their struggles in the cause of freedom, there are other names, which will descend to the latest posterity, as the deliverers of their country from a thraldom more dreadful by far than that of any foreign yoke."

But though great effects have been achieved, much more remains to be accomplished. The present is no time for the friends of Temperance to relax their efforts, and fold up their arms. The ground that has been gained will be in danger of being lost, without constant vigilance, and untiring exertion. We cannot safely remain stationary in the position where we are. We have taken, it is true, a breathing time; and probably we needed it; but it should only be to prepare ourselves for renewed,—for redoubled efforts.

There are secret obstacles, I have said, to the progress of the cause. Many such might be designated in erroneous opinions, and evil practices, still prevailing in the community. Many such

obstacles are presented, though unintentionally it may be, in the conduct of those, who, though professing to wish well to the cause, yet stand aloof, and take no active part in the work. There is an obstacle in the unfavorable influence of their example ;—in the inferences so likely to be drawn from their apparent indifference. Obstacles, too, are presented by the lukewarmness and timidity of not a few of the professed friends of the cause.

But I do not purpose now to speak more particularly of any of these hindrances to the progress of the Temperance Reformation, for there is another obstacle so great, that all beside sink into insignificance on a comparison. This obstacle, strange as the annunciation may at first appear, is presented by the *laws of the land. Our own laws, the laws which purport to be enacted for the* PUBLIC GOOD, *are themselves the greatest bar to the completion of the Temperance Reformation.* These laws have undergone, from time to time, various modifications, but have been, and still are, all based on the assumption, that the use of ardent spirit as a drink is for the *public good.* According to existing statutes, the *Revised Statutes* of the Commonwealth, so many licenses are to be granted by city and town authorities, for the retail of ardent spirit, as they shall judge that the "*public good* requires." Every license, therefore, that is granted, carries with it the recorded opinion of Selectmen and County Commissioners, or of the Mayor and Aldermen, as the case may be, that the public good requires that ardent spirit should be used as an article of drink. To Selectmen, if any such are present, I put the question,—Can you, *upon your consciences,* and *upon your official oaths,* declare, that it is your opinion, that the *public good requires,* that any license should be granted for the sale of ardent spirit as an article of drink? If such be not your deliberate conviction, how can you put your names to the certificate to that effect? Far be it from me to intimate that any one possesses a compliant conscience in this matter, or is untrue to his official trust. It is proper to presume that every one is sincere in his expressed opinion, that the *drinking of ardent spirit* is for the public good. But they, who certify to this effect, may rest assured, that they enjoy the unenviable distinction of standing almost alone in this opinion.

In the midst of that flood of light, which has been poured upon this subject within a few years past, is there any proposition, that appears, in the view of an intelligent mind, more monstrous, than the one which stands forth upon our Statute book, and is, year by year, endorsed by Selectmen and County Commissioners, viz. that the use of ardent spirit as a drink is for the *public good?* The "shield of legislative sanction and support" is thus thrown over a practice, which nothing else could screen from merited abhorrence. Its true character is thus concealed. The mind's judgment is deceived. And they, who are not much accustomed to discriminate, and who compose no small portion of the community, are led to confound what is legal with what is right.

But we will examine this subject a little more at length. And perhaps it may aid us to arrive at more just conclusions, in regard to what the *public good* requires, by comparing the licensed sale of ardent spirit with other practices which have been upheld and countenanced by the same mistaken policy.

One instance is in the case of Lotteries. Not many years have passed away, since *lotteries, licensed* by the State, were common, and held out their tempting prizes to all classes of the people. There were state lotteries and canal lotteries, church lotteries and college lotteries. They were liberally granted for public works of all kinds; for hospitals and asylums, for roads and bridges, for the erection of monuments, for the improvement of water courses, and even for replenishing the exhausted treasury of some of the States. For a long period the public mind seemed unaware of the evils which flowed from this source. How large an amount of the gains of honest industry was here adventured and lost! How many hopes were cherished only to be disappointed! How many airy castles were erected only to be dashed to the ground! How great was the encouragement that lotteries afforded to idleness, and improvidence, and reckless adventure! And how insensible was the commmunity, for a long period, to the true nature and tendency of this species of gambling! It was not indeed till an individual, who had acquired the unlimited confidence of others in the faithful discharge of an important trust he occupied, and who stood high in general esteem

for his character and personal worth, being driven by his losses to a fit of desperation, threw himself into the waters of Charles river, that the public mind was aroused to perceive the pernicious tendency of lotteries. Then was the subject recommended by the Executive to the attention of the Legislature. Then was the Legislature induced to act; and this species of gambling, with us at least, is put down, as we trust, forever.

But not lotteries only, but houses expressly intended as places of resort for gambling, are licensed by legislative authority, in some parts of our country, at the present day. A revenue, of $100,000, is said to be annually derived from *licensed gaming houses* to the treasury of a single city. Nay;—what seems still more horrible than this,—in some parts of the world, even among a people professing to be Christian, and priding themselves on their pre-eminence in all the refinements of a highly cultivated and polished society,—I refer particularly to France, and to the city of Paris,—an immense revenue accrues to the crown from *licensed brothels.* That extensive and splendid structure, the Palais Royal, once the residence of the court of France, becoming the property of the duke of Orleans, the father of Louis Philippe, he fitted up in its present magnificence; and when, by a career of dissipation and profligacy, he had exhausted his princely revenues, he resolved on the expedient, for retrieving his ruined fortunes, of converting this splendid palace to the purposes of infamy. And such, to this day, continues to be the purpose, to which its apartments are appropriated by licenses from the government.

All the better feelings of our nature revolt from the idea of granting licenses for such purposes. But where is the difference, in point of principle or policy, between *licensing houses* for *gambling* or *prostitution*, and *licensing* them for the *sale of ardent spirit?* Does the public good require one and not the others? I venture to affirm, and I challenge contradiction, that all the evils which have been brought upon mankind, by licensed gaming houses and brothels, are but as the dust of the balance, when compared with that vast amount of human misery, which derives its origin from bar-rooms and dram-shops, that are licensed, ac-

cording to the statute, for the "*public good.*" Amazing inconsistency! Nothing but familiarity with our own custom could blind the mind to its real enormity. Its real enormity! Do I mistake its character? Am I guilty of any perversion? I wish to ascertain and expose only the plain truth of the matter.

Let us then consider this question of the *public good.* Let us inquire *what good* is rendered to the *public* by houses licensed to retail ardent spirit. By *public good* I presume must be intended some *good* done to the *individuals who compose the public;* for, I suppose, the *public* can be nothing else than the *individuals who compose it, spoken of collectively.* If, then, licensed houses confer no good on the *individuals who constitute the public,* they surely can confer none on the *public;* for, separated from its constituent parts, the *public* is a mere *nonentity.* What good then is done to individuals by licensed houses?—that is, by the bar-rooms and dram-shops of the land? The only one, I believe, that is pretended, or, at any rate, the only one I have heard assigned, is *the refreshment of the traveller.* This can be conceived to apply to but very few, if any, out of the four hundred licensed houses of the city, and to only a very small proportion of those, which are licensed in the country. Suppose then the traveller, exhausted by fatigue, or chilled by exposure, to have stopped at the tavern for refreshment. If he partake of the beverage, which is there licensed to be sold him, I ask, will he be invigorated, and made better able to resume and go through his journey? True, he may be excited, for a short time, and made unmindful of fatigue, but it is a state of feeling which is a sure precursor of ensuing weakness; and a weakness exactly corresponding in degree to the preceding unnatural excitement. Is he, I ask, by such refreshment, made better able to pursue his journey? Is he better able to endure fatigue? Is he thereby fitted to bear exposure to the cold and snow? Let the instances, without number, of travellers, who, after freely partaking of such refreshment, have sunk down under its influence, and perished by the way,—let these give the answer to the question. Let the case, no uncommon one, of the weary teamster, whose spiritous refreshment at the bar-room caused him to reel

and fall, so that his head was crushed by the wheel of his wagon,—let this give the answer to the question.

But suppose the traveller to be a temperance man,—suppose he is an invalid,—or is travelling with a sick or afflicted wife, and his little children, for the purpose of relaxation, or finding health or comfort, or enjoying the beauties of rural scenery,—how are they refreshed by what meets them at the tavern? Is the eye-sight refreshed by the spectacle of the sottish hangers-on, who crowd the door way, or lounge about the bar? Is any refreshment afforded to the sense of smell by the atmosphere that surrounds the drunkard, by the scent of rum or of brandy, of whiskey or of gin, compounded with the fumes of tobacco? Or is the hearing of the delicate and sensitive ear gratified and refreshed by the incessant pounding and grinding of the toddy-stick, intermingled with the shouts of revelry and the curses of the profane?

So much then for the only pretext that can be set up for licensed houses, as conducing to the public good, to wit, the refreshment of the traveller;—a pretext, however, that can have no application to the thousands of these establishments, which are not kept for the accommodation of the traveller. They afford, it is true, some income, from the price of the license,—and what is it?—a *thousand dollars*, or a *hundred dollars, a piece?*—a sum that would prevent in most cases an application for the privilege?—no; but ONE DOLLAR,—ONE DOLLAR *to the City or County treasury!* a pitiful price that is paid out, in consequence, a hundred fold, for the support of the pauper, and the punishment of the felon.

But, in addition to this, how great is the cost to the community! Take the city of Boston, by way of example. Four hundred dollars go into the treasury annually, for the licenses that are granted to as many places for the sale of spiritous liquors. Suppose, what I presume must be a moderate calculation, far within the truth, that the sales of spirit, at each one of these licensed houses, amount, upon an average, to but five dollars a week,—surely a small computation, taking the average,—the aggregate of sales will be five times 400, which is equal to $2000 a week, and will ex-

ceed $100,000 a year. Were this estimate to be trebled it would probably be nearer the truth. So immense is the annual expenditure by the customers at these establishments!—and for what?—any thing that can impart health or strength to the human system?—any thing that will minister to a natural appetite or want?—any thing that will conduce to the individual's welfare, personal comfort, or peace of mind; or that will contribute to the support of his family, or the comfort and happiness of his wife and children?—No; not one of these. This immense sum is expended for an article, that is not only useless, but infinitely worse than useless, as a drink; which is proved by the concurring testimony of the medical faculty, and demonstrated by universal experience, to be never necessary nor useful to men in health; but always, in all cases, positively injurious. This immense expenditure, therefore, is worse than so much money thrown away; and it comes mainly from that portion of the community, who are the least able to bear it; from the middling and lower classes, the whole income of whose labor is not more than is wanted for the support and comfort of their families; more especially in times of sickness, or in seasons of scarcity; in seasons like the present, when profitable employment is not easily to be procured, and when, in consequence, such multitudes are made dependant on the charity of their neighbors.

In vain do we search, therefore, at the licensed houses for any thing that can be regarded as conducing to the *public good.* But possibly the idea may present itself to the minds of some, that a license for the sale of spirit must, at any rate, conduce to the *good of the retailer.* But even this, I apprehend, is very remote from the fact. With the exception of innholders and common victuallers, the great body of retailers throughout the State are grocers. And so far is it from being the fact, that the good of the grocer is promoted by the sale of spiritous liquor, I hazard nothing in saying, that, in the majority of instances, if not in all, the fact is directly the reverse. To say nothing of those, and they are no inconsiderable number, whose better feelings revolt from the scenes and company they are likely to meet at the licensed retailers, and who therefore give their patronage ex-

clusively to temperance stores,—I ask, who are the grocer's most profitable customers? On what class does he depend, with the greatest confidence, that they will promptly discharge their dues? Is it on those, whose daily gains are paid down in cash for intoxicating drinks, and who, in consequence, are incapacitated from paying for the sugar, the flour, the coffee, and the tea, which their families have consumed, and which stand charged to their account? Or is it to the steady, the sober, the temperate and industrious classes of the community, that the grocer looks for his punctual payments?—and from whom, indeed, may he not feel a temptation to endeavor, by the exaction of greater profits, to obtain indemnity for his losses in other quarters? Were it not for the purchase of spiritous liquors, what multitudes there are of unprofitable customers, who would become sober, industrious and thriving members of the community; who would thus acquire credit, and possess the means of purchasing and paying for a much larger amount of useful articles of family consumption, and thus contributing far more to the support of the honest grocer.

There is another consideration bearing upon the same point. "An industrious and virtuous community," it has been truly remarked, "will enhance the value of the real property in their place of residence, and thus will benefit all, who possess an interest in the neighborhood or country. *Production* is as essential to a prosperous commerce as *consumption. A race of men who produce nothing will not long be able to purchase and consume.* They who are addicted to intemperance produce at best far *less than they consume.* Intemperance, therefore, is manifestly injurious to the interest of the merchant and trader; and it must be wholly a wrong view of their own interest, that can induce any of these to give it their countenance and support."

Thus far, then, we can find no good accruing to the public, or to the individuals who compose the public, from the licensed sale of ardent spirit. View the subject in whatever light we may, however searching the analysis to which we subject it, we shall come to the same result, that there is *no good, of any name or nature*, that results to the individual or to society from the purchase and consumption of ardent spirit as an article of drink.

Does it promote man's *physical good?* The time once was, when the idea was entertained by some, that it was useful for labouring men, and for those, who were subjected to exposure and fatigue. But such opinion has been long since conclusively disproved. So far is it from imparting strength to the system, that there is no organ in the human body, to the healthful performance of whose functions the intoxicating principle, *alcohol*, is not an injury. It is now conceded, on all hands, to be *a poison to the human system.* It contains not a particle of aliment, that can, by the powers of digestion and assimilation, be converted to the nourishment of the system. "I cannot find language," says Dr. Warren, "strong enough to repeat and impress the fact, that the use of ardent spirits does not give strength, but weakness. A momentary flush of power may be excited under their first impulse; but this is soon followed by a physical failure of strength."

How destructive, indeed, are the effects of ardent spirit upon the human body! The celebrated Dr. Rush has published a long catalogue of mortal diseases, which are the natural consequences of its habitual use. The testimony has been given to the public of forty physicians of New York, that "disease and death are the result of the continued use of alcohol upon the healthy human system; that ardent spirit never operates as a *preventive* of epidemic or pestilential diseases, but is *very generally* an *exciting cause* of such diseases, and *always aggravates them;* that the tone of the nervous system being impaired by the use of intoxicating liquors, the constitution thus becomes more susceptible to the impression of all noxious agents; that intemperance destroys the susceptibility of the body to the operation of medicine, so far as it injures the tone of the nervous system; that the disease of an habitual drunkard will generally run its course, uninfluenced by medical treatment; that, in the exhaustion produced by intemperance, medicines are often useless; that ardent spirits are the most common source of *insanity*, which they cause by producing inflammation of the brain; and that they often produce that terrible disease called *delirium tremens*, in which, while the animal powers are prostrated, the mind is tortured with the most distressing and fearful imaginations." It is thus establish-

ed, by testimony the most competent, and the least exceptionable, that the danger of disease going on to a fatal termination is, other things being equal, in proportion to the freedom of the use which the individual has made of intoxicating drinks; and that the direct tendency of such use, in all cases, is to bring on debility, disease, premature old age and death. In all this we see how dreadful are the maladies, by which the Almighty hath signified his displeasure at this species of sensual indulgence.

If then the use of ardent spirit is not conducive to the *physical good* of the individual, consider next, whether it promotes his *intellectual* or his *moral good*. Does it not tend directly to cloud his understanding, impair his memory, and pervert his moral faculties? Have not all of you seen it operate to weaken the powers of intellect, and turn the man of sense into a fool? Does not every one know, that it obscures the soul's perception of truth and duty, and destroys the sentiment of honour, and all virtuous self-respect? How low, indeed, must *he* be fallen, and how desperate *his* condition, who has lost all *self-respect!* This is one of the strongest safeguards of virtue, and so long as any one retains it there may be hope of his recovery, but, when this is gone, he has surrendered the last ground, on which his remaining virtues can rally and make a stand. No one, whose eyes are open upon the scenes that are enacted around him, can be insensible to the fact, that the use of ardent spirit tends more powerfully than every thing else to debase man's character, to bloat and deform his countenance, to efface from his soul every feature of its divinity, and to degrade that nature, which was originally fashioned in the image of God, below the level of the brute creation. I say *below* the level; for the noblest of the brute creation possess, at the best, but little intellect; and all are equally destitute of a moral nature. For the rational and immortal soul, that is thus enslaved by appetite, and degraded *below the brutes*, would it not have been better if it had not been born?—better, that is, not to have possessed these exalted spiritual endowments, than to possess them only to destroy? Indeed! what exhibition can be conceived of human degradation and human misery, more revolting to every noble sentiment of the soul, than such as are

often witnessed as the natural effect of the bar-room and the grog-shop, *licensed*, as expressed in the statute, for the PUBLIC GOOD!

But let us look once more, and, if we can find *no physical, no intellectual*, and *no moral good*, accruing to the individual from the use of this legalized beverage, inquire if there be no *social good*,—no good to *society*,—to the *community*,—or to the *family*? *Good! to society, or to the family!* I will answer the question in the words of Mr. Condict, of New Jersey, spoken on the floor of Congress, a few years since, when he presented a petition for a heavy excise upon domestic distilled spirits, and an increased duty upon those that are imported. "What is it, that unfits man for the duties of social and domestic life? What is it, that carries strife and contention into every neighborhood? What invades the domestic circle, banishing conjugal affection, and sundering every tie of endearment? What entails poverty and wretchedness and infamy upon the innocent; literally visiting the iniquities of the *fathers* upon the *children* unto the third and fourth generation? What is it, that wrings the tear from the eye of disconsolate beauty, and reddens its cheek with blushes? What is it, that draws forth the midnight sigh from the lonely and broken-hearted mother, as she strives to cover her shivering infant with her scanty rags, or stifle the cries of hunger by the charities of her neighbor? What inflicts disease in its most painful and loathsome shape? What is it, that sweeps, as with the besom of destruction, more human victims to an untimely grave, than sword and pestilence combined? What fills your poor houses with paupers, and your hospitals with invalids? What crowds your jails with criminals, and gives employment to the hangman? It is *intemperance in the use of spiritous liquors.*" In other words, it is the very thing that is sanctioned and supported by legislation;—*it is the* BAR-ROOM *and the* DRAM-SHOP, *licensed by the statute, for the* PUBLIC GOOD!

Such are the legitimate effects, which the use of spiritous liquors brings directly upon families and society. All other evils and miseries to which flesh is heir, when compared with these, are insignificant in importance. Indeed, to recount the

effects which are produced on the community, by the licensed sale of intoxicating drink, would be little else than the recital of the whole catalogue of human woes.

And shall we consent to have the fountains of all this wretchedness and crime continued open, every where around us; pouring forth their streams of pollution, disease, and physical and moral death? If we are able to restrain this flood of moral evil, and reduce thereby the largest amount of human misery, can any thing free us from the obligation to exert the power?

Did we know of but one individual, who was thus perverting the purposes of his being, unfitting himself for every thing useful in the world, destroying the moral image of his Creator, undermining his constitution, ruining the peace and happiness of those most intimately connected with him, pursuing with a blind infatuation the path that leads to the perdition of the soul, and about to entail upon his children, as their only inheritance, poverty and wretchedness, together with the baleful influence of his example and the disgrace of his ill name, with what feelings of profound commiseration should we not contemplate his fate! How anxiously should we look for some kind hand to be stretched out to rescue him from the impending doom! How eager should we be ourselves to rush to the spot, that we might snatch our fellow being from the brink of that precipice, where the head grows dizzy, and the eyes swim! What then should be our feelings, and what our efforts, when such is the condition,—not of *one individual*,—not of *one family*,—but of *thousands* and *thousands* scattered over the face of the whole land! We must surely be divested of the attributes of humanity,—our sentiments of compassion must be bound up in hearts of stone, if we can contemplate the spectacle unmoved. Our consciences must be deadened to all sense of moral obligation, if they fail to recognize here an imperative call for effort.

Have we not seen many a young man, of promising abilities, the pride and hope of his parents, yielding himself a willing victim to the insidious arts of the destroyer? Many such an one we have seen entering upon the world with the best resolutions, and the fairest prospects. But he visits the bar-room; he partakes

of the beverage there licensed to be sold him, and which is disguised in every form that is best suited to tempt his unsophisticated taste; and he turns thence to other resorts of revelry. His visits, which at first were seldom, by degrees grow frequent, to the haunts of riot and excess, till his business becomes neglected, his prospects are obscured, and his early admonitions and resolutions forgotten. Next he is seen with a bloated countenance, a stupified mind, and a constitution that is the prey of loathsome disease. Such an one we may have seen carrried off, by the hand of friendship, to the asylum for the insane; or, by the officers of justice, to the prison. Doubtless we have witnessed the mourning of parents over the fate of such a son, given up the irreclaimable victim of intemperance,—parents, who would have esteemed it a merciful providence, could they have been called to close his eyes in peace, and follow him to an honorable grave. And, it may be, that some of us have been present, when parents have been called up at midnight, to receive the mangled and lifeless body of their only son, with the heart-rending intelligence that it was found in the highway. The *licensed bar-room* was the cause of all.

Turn your attention, for a moment, to the dwelling of a poor family, where the lonely and broken-hearted mother sits sighing by the decaying embers of her fire,—her children crying around her for bread,—their clothes in rags,—their fuel expended, and the cold storms of winter driving through the shattered doors and windows. Where is the husband of this disconsolate woman? Where is the father of these shivering and famishing children? He is at the *licensed retailer's;* spending his last earnings to buy, not bread to satisfy the cravings of his family, but that, which seems to his besotted senses to be better than bread, or clothing, or fuel, for it will drown his thoughts of the misery there is at home. His wife is anxiously waiting for his return, until he staggers home, at last, an angry and turbulent brute, or is brought by others a senseless and disgusting load. Not a night passes, but what exhibits the reality of this description, in whole or in part, in a thousand dwellings of this otherwise happy land.

But even more deplorable still is the spectacle, when woman, "lovely woman stoops to folly;" when she, who is a wife and mother, becomes the victim of intemperate drinking. Her husband, with a bosom rent with anguish, is made to detest his home, and seek perhaps his solace in the inebriating bowl. Her children, who naturally look to her for instruction and cherishing affection, being, at one time, caressed with a maudlin tenderness, and, at another, repulsed with the aspect of brutality,—what can be anticipated that is favorable of their future character or condition? Nature hath implanted in woman's heart feelings for her offspring, which are stronger far than her attachment to her life; feelings, which only one thing on earth has ever had sufficient power to subdue, and that is the craving appetite for spiritous liquor. To some the statement may seem incredible, but the fact is well attested, I have personal knowledge of the same, that there have been mothers, who have taken the bread of charity from their children's mouths, and the clothes which compassionate neighbors had bestowed for a cover to their nakedness, and a protection from the cold, and have bartered them for rum. Is it possible to conceive of any thing else in the world, which has such power to subdue the feelings of nature in the mother's heart?

We must be destitute of faith in the righteous providence of God, if we can suppose, that, for these dreadful evils, there is no remedy. There is a remedy that will prove effectual; and it lies within our own power. But it is a sad reflection, how great still is the insensibility of the community to the magnitude and extent of these evils, and to the criminality of licensing the source from which they spring. It appears to be a law of our nature, that we should be least affected by that which is most common. It is the very commonness of the evils caused by intoxicating drink,—it is familiarity with the scenes of the bar-room and dram shop,—that produces in multitudes of minds this strange insensibility, and changes the pity, the horror, or the disgust, which they seem calculated to excite, into feelings, on the part of the thoughtless, of merriment and ridicule.

The drinking of spiritous liquor is the cause of still farther evils. It sweeps away, every year, thousands of victims to an

and, by a due observation, I have found, that, if the murders and manslaughters, the burglaries and robberies, the riots and tumults, the adulteries and other great enormities, that have happened in that time, were divided into *five parts*, *four* of them have been the issue and product of excessive drinking, of taverns and ale-house meetings."

Such is the appalling reality as regards the magnitude and extent of those evils, which spring directly from the BAR-ROOM and the DRAM-SHOP, LICENSED, *according to the Statute, for the* PUBLIC GOOD!

What, then, is our duty, as citizens and as Christians, in reference to this matter? Here is a momentous inquiry. There is an awful responsibility somewhere resting for the authorized existence of this vast amount of misery and crime. By *whom* and by *what* is it caused? Is it a necessary evil? Are there no means of drying up the fountain? Has not each one of us a portion of the guilt to bear? In the eye of Him who knows each one's strength of resolution, and moral power to withstand temptation, may not the poor, weak, miserable, deluded and besotted victim be regarded as the least guilty?

The source of all this evil is the *licensed sale of ardent spirit. Our laws sanction and support it;* and *we ourselves choose*, from year to year, *the legislators to make and modify the laws.* The tremendous responsibility, therefore, for the continuance of all this evil, rests ultimately upon ourselves. For one, I am resolved to discharge my duty, and do whatever lies in me to procure the repeal of laws, which produce only evil, unmingled evil, and that continually. Whatever others may think themselves called on or not to do, the convictions of my own mind on this momentous subject I will utter; and thereby endeavor to discharge my part of the responsibility.

How glaring is the inconsistency of our laws! How amazing is the apathy of the public mind to this inconsistency! Laws without number we enact to prevent and punish vice and crime; we establish and support courts of justice to try offenders; we erect prisons and penitentiaries for criminals; we build almshouses for the poor, and hospitals for invalids; we levy taxes for all

untimely grave. War and pestilence are comparatively harmless by the side of this destroyer of mankind. Great as was the effusion of blood by our last war, it was satisfied with less than five hundred victims a year. The most fearful pestilence that ever visited our country, the yellow fever of 1793, did not extend beyond the single city of Philadelphia, and was appeased with less than four thousand. But we are comparatively little moved at the thought of another destroyer, carrying off more than *ten thousand every year*. *Two hundred* of our fellow beings, it has been ascertained from authentic data, *are sacrificed* in our land to *spiritous liquor, every week*.*

But the catalogue of evils which spring from this source is not yet exhausted. Besides disease and death, the drinking of spiritous liquor, the beverage licensed to be retailed at almost every corner, produces poverty and crime. By the published reports of the superintendents of almshouses and hospitals, in various places, it appears, that, at least, *four-fifths of the paupers and invalids* supported by the public *are made such by the bar-room and the grog-shop*. Our jails, it is notorious, are filled with criminals, who have been brought there by the same cause; and, whenever the gallows is erected for a public execution, is it not generally the case, that the miserable victim of the violated laws of his country has been brought to this end by the power of strong drink? A distinguished lawyer and judge, Sir Matthew Hale, has given this testimony to the public; "The places of judicature, which I have so long held, have given me opportunity to observe the original cause of most of the enormities, that have been committed for the space of near twenty years;

*The bill of mortality for the city of Boston, from January 1837 to January 1838, has recently been published, and states the whole number at 1843. The diseases are given as far as reported to the health office. "In the long and melancholy catalogue we find the following; accidental, 13; apoplexy, 31; *delirium tremens*, 11; diseases unknown, 269, (probably more than half occasioned by intoxicating drinks;) *intoxication*, 17; drowned, 23; suicide, 10. To say nothing of the more remote or direct effect of intoxicating drinks in consumption, dropsy, palsy, &c. &c. we are irresistibly led to the conclusion that more than *two hundred* of the whole number of deaths were occasioned by moderate or immoderate drinking. What agency bar-rooms or dram-shops had in producing this melancholy result is a question which we leave for those, who make and execute laws for the 'public good,' to settle for themselves."—*Mer. Jour.*

these purposes upon the industry of the whole people; and, at the same time, we sanction and support by law the very establishments, which produce, as every one must admit, four-fifths of all the pauperism and crime. What will an enlightened posterity think of such inconsistent and fatuous legislation!

The mischief is, that legalizing the sale of ardent spirit renders men insensible to its criminality. Whatever is *legal*, whatever is *sanctioned by law*, we are apt to regard as *right*. But no human legislation can make THAT *right, which, by the law of God, is wrong*. Is not the sale of ardent spirit wrong? Is it not criminal? The vender may make the plea, that he does not intend wrong; that he means no harm; that he does not wish to injure any one; but I would put to him the question,—Is it not fair to presume, that you mean that, which you certainly see to follow inevitably from what you do? Is it not a sound principle in ethics, that *every one is responsible for the known consequences of his voluntary acts?* Is it not universally so considered? Apply then this principle, and the seller of ardent spirit cannot escape from responsibility,—cannot shelter himself under his license from criminality. Apply this principle, and the legislator, who gives his sanction to the traffic, must be convicted. Apply this principle, and we ourselves, who choose that legislator, must plead guilty.

Thus far the Temperance Cause has been carried on upon the principle of voluntary abstinence, supposing the cause of the evil to be unremoved. We have appealed to the moral sentiment of the community, to enable it to withstand temptation; and have been reluctant to look to legislation for the removal of the temptation. But, so long as the allurements continue to be presented to the weak and irresolute at every corner, it is an idle dream that the evils of intemperance can be done away. There are multitudes, who are reached but little, if at all, by the moral power of public sentiment. There are many with appetites, either of voluntary formation, or, what is not unfrequently the case, transmitted, by a law of our physical nature, from intemperate parents, so craving as to take away almost, if not altogether, the power of resisting the allurements of the bar-room and the dram-shop. Have we no duty to this numerous and most-to-be-

pitied class of our fellow beings? Thousands of them, in their sober hours, wish to abstain, and resolve they will, but temptation assails them in an unguarded moment, and all their better purposes are overcome. I commiserate them from the bottom of my soul. Upon my conscience, I cannot regard them as so guilty, as he who takes advantage of their weakness, and presents the draught. *No man has a right to take advantage of another's weakness.* It is our duty to prevent him; not less clearly than to arrest the uplifted arm of the assassin. Nay, infinitely better were it to fall by the hand of violence, than to die the death of the drunkard.

How weak is the pretence that we have no right to interfere with others' business,—a business that is legal! Indubitably we have the right. There might, indeed, be some show of plausibility in the plea, if they, who are licensed to make the drunkards, were obliged to support their beggared families, and protect the community from harm. But a manifest injustice is done the public. The peace and good order of the community are exposed to outrage; the rights of person and of property are put at peril; and all are taxed for the maintenance of the paupers, and the prosecution, and conviction, and punishment of the criminals, who have been made such by the bar-rooms and dram-shops established under the licenses of the Commonwealth;—yes, taxed to an amount exceeding the whole assessment for the support of schools and the public institutions of benevolence and religion.

What a glorious change would be effected in the condition and prospects of our people, were our legislators, instead of sanctioning the sale and consumption of ardent spirit as a drink, to direct their efforts to prevent the same under the severest pains and penalties, and thus put down forever the bar-room and the dram-shop! If alcohol should still be necessary in medicine and in the arts, let its distillation and sale be confined to the druggist and apothecary. What an immense amount of human misery would thus be swept away! By this removal of four-fifths of the poverty, wretchedness and crime among us, a greater benefit would be done to man than was ever effected by a single act of legislation since the foundation of the world.

I look forward, with pleasing anticipation, to the time, when the present artificial and injurious distinctions of society shall be done away; when princely fortunes shall no longer be amassed, by a favored few, for the gratification of pride and the love of power; and when the lower orders of mankind shall no longer be trampled into the dust. I look for the coming of the time, though it may not be in my day, when the lower classes of society shall all be actuated by a proper self-respect; when they shall have conceded to them all the rights of men; and when, by the employments of an honest industry, they shall elevate themselves, and sustain conditions of usefulness and honor. A great principle is now mightily at work for the improvement of the intellectual, moral and social condition of our race. To this improvement the greatest of all impediments is the licensed sale of intoxicating drink. It is the bar-room and the dram-shop, which contribute, more than every thing else, to keep down the lower classes, and associate them with the brutes.

The object we propose is surely worth an effort. The blessings, which were procured for us by the long-protracted struggle of our fathers for independence, are not worthy to be compared to those, which would follow, could an effectual stop be put forever to the sale and consumption of all intoxicating liquor, as an article of drink. Indeed, there is no small reason to apprehend that our rich inheritance we shall be unable to hand down to those who succeed us, if the bar-room and the dram-shop are to be suffered to continue their pernicious influence, to frustrate all our efforts for improvement, and to blight all our fairest prospects with their pestilential breath.

It is the duty of every one to feel an interest, and make an effort, for the welfare of his race. We are connected to one another by a thousand ties. No man liveth for himself alone. The obligations are solemn and momentous which devolve upon the present toward the coming generation. In no small degree, we are constituted the arbiters, not only of our own, but of our children's destiny. The dangers, which lie in our path, if unremoved and unchecked, will go down to our posterity, with accumulated perils. Should such be the case, can the true patriot

and philanthropist,—can the Christian moralist,—can the fond-hearted parent,—look forward to those times which must succeed his own, without feeling the most melancholy forebodings for the destiny of his country, for the interests of religion and public morals, and for the temporal and eternal welfare of those, who are literally "bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh?"

But let us devoutly trust in God, that he will spare his people, and not doom this goodly heritage to an everlasting reproach. Let us trust in his gracious providence, that the spirit of righteous reform may go forth over our whole land; that all measures of iniquity may be arrested; that all laws, which sanction vice and crime, and bring a flood of misery upon the world, may be repealed; that unhallowed passion, and lawless violence, and tumult and riot may cease; and that the pure influences of knowledge and virtue and temperance, and the love of order and quiet and peace, and a disinterested regard for the welfare of our country and our race, may universally prevail.

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